

Application/Control Number: 09/880,144
Art Unit: 3643
September 23, 2002
Page 3

In the Claims.

Please cancel claims 1-13 without prejudice and thereafter add the following new claims:

Subj 2
Cont.
B
--14. A modular cage, comprising:

corner joints having a corner body and at least three tangs that protrude at right angles from said corner body;

reversible locking devices provided at said tangs;

first profiled elements, comprising first seats which have surfaces thereof shaped complementary to the tangs, said tangs being insertable with said reversible locking devices in said first seats for interlocking;

second profiled elements comprising first seats which have surfaces thereof shaped complementary to the tangs, said tangs being insertable with said reversible locking devices in said first seats for interlocking; and

grill-like wall elements;

said first and second profiles being removably connected to each other and interlocked by way of said corner joints so as to form a supporting frame and said grill-like elements being removably connected to said supporting frame so as to form said cage.

15. The cage of claim 14, further comprising a drawer-like body which is slidably insertable at a lower part of said frame so as to constitute a bottom of the cage.

16. The cage of claim 14, wherein said first and second profiled elements are substantially tubular.

17. The cage of claim 15, wherein said second profiled elements are arranged at the lower part of the frame and comprise respective second seats which are open and arranged longitudinally along said second profiled elements so as to form sliding guides for said drawer-like body.

18. The cage according to claim 17, further comprising first and second contoured end plugs which are provided with respective tangs, said second profiled elements comprising respective third seats in which said tangs of said contoured end plugs are inserted and locked.

Application/Control Number: 09/880,144

Art Unit: 3643

September 23, 2002

Page 4

19. The cage of claim 18, comprising at least two said first end plugs which are constituted each by a corner block, said tangs being tubular and monolithic with said corner block and protruding therefrom.

20. The cage according to claim 19, comprising at least two said second end plugs which are constituted by a corner block, said tangs being tubular and monolithic with said corner block and protruding therefrom, said corner block further comprising a recess which is arranged so as to provide an extension of a corresponding one of said second seats providing said sliding guides for the drawer-like body.

21. The cage according to claim 17, wherein said drawer-like body is constituted by a tray with sides shaped complementarily to surfaces of said second seats, and by a grille-like panel which surmounts said sides.

22. The cage according to claim 14, wherein said reversible locking devices are constituted each by an elastic tongue provided monolithic with a respective one of said tangs and by a slot formed in a corresponding one of said first and second profiled elements, said tongue being adapted to enter, with a reversible interlocking action, a respective slot.

23. The cage of claim 14, further comprising auxiliary connection components, each one of said corner bodies of said corner joints being provided with a dead hole for accommodating a respective one of said auxiliary connecting components.

24. The cage of claim 14, wherein said corner joints are provided with at least one additional tang for connection to additional frames arranged side by side to provide modular extension of the cage.

25. The cage according to claim 23, wherein said auxiliary connection components comprise pins provided with an intermediate flange, said pins being each accommodatable in the dead hole of a respective one of said corner joints so as to allow modular stacked extension of the frames.

26. The cage according to claim 23, wherein said auxiliary connection components comprise wheels, of the castor type, with a pin-shaped tang to provide wheeled support for the cage.

27. A modular cage, comprising:

Application/Control Number: 09/880,144
Art Unit: 3643
September 23, 2002
Page 5

corner joints having a corner body and at least three tangs that protrude at right angles from said corner body;

reversible locking devices provided at said tangs;

first profiled elements, comprising first seats which have surfaces thereof shaped complementary to the tangs, said tangs being insertable with said reversible locking devices in said first seats for interlocking;

second profiled elements being provided with first seats, which have surfaces thereof shaped complementary to the tangs, said tangs being insertable with said reversible locking devices in said first seats for interlocking, and with second seats which are open and arranged longitudinally along said second profiled elements;

grill-like wall elements; and

a drawer-like body;

said first and second profiles being removably connected to each other and interlocked by way of said corner joints so as to form a supporting frame, said grill-like elements being removably connected to said supporting frame so as to form said cage, and said drawer-like body being slidably insertable in sliding guides formed by said second seats at a lower part of said frame so as to constitute a bottom of the cage.

28. A modular cage, comprising:

corner joints having a corner body and at least three tangs that protrude at right angles from said corner body;

first and second contoured end plugs provided with respective tangs;

reversible locking devices provided at said tangs;

first profiled elements, comprising first seats which have surfaces thereof shaped complementary to the tangs, said tangs being insertable with said reversible locking devices in said first seats for interlocking;

second profiled elements provided with first seats, which have surfaces thereof shaped complementary to the tangs, said tangs being insertable with said reversible locking devices in said first seats for interlocking, with second seats which are open and arranged longitudinally along said second profiled elements, and with third seats in which said tangs of said first and second contoured end plugs are insertable for locking;

Application/Control Number: 09/880,144
Art Unit: 3643
September 23, 2002
Page 6

grill-like wall elements; and

a drawer-like body;

said first and second profiles being removably connected to each other and interlocked by way of said corner joints so as to form a supporting frame, said grill-like elements being removably connected to said supporting frame so as to form said cage, and said drawer-like body being slidingly insertable in sliding guides formed by said second seats at a lower part of said frame so as to constitute a bottom of the cage. —

12
Concl'd.